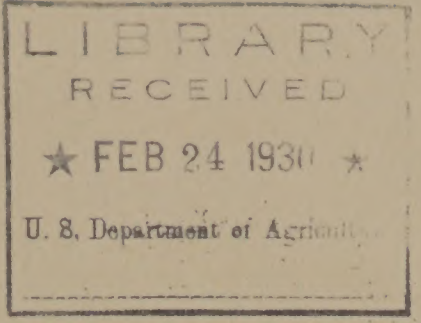


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PRODUCING FRUIT FOR HOME USE

A radio talk by Dr. J. R. Magness, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through Station WRC and 32 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, February 10, 1930.

One of the outstanding advantages of farm life is the possibility of producing on the farm a large portion of the food for the family, including much of the fruit, most of the vegetables, and practically all of the poultry and dairy products. Frequently the city dweller can also produce considerable quantities of fruits and vegetables on his home lot.

Not all fruits are equally well suited for production in the home garden. Many of our fruits require so much detailed care and attention that it is difficult to grow a good quality product. For example, it is not easy to grow high-grade apples in the home garden. So many insect pests and diseases attack apples and also pears that from three to six sprays per year must be applied in most parts of the country to keep the fruit clean and of high quality. These sprays must be very accurately timed if they are to be effective. On the average farm not specializing in fruit production other farm operations frequently make it difficult to spray a few fruit trees when spraying is needed. Consequently, many apples produced in home orchards are wormy, scabby, and of poor quality. Unless considerable detailed care can be given to the home fruit orchard, the planting of apples and pears is not to be recommended.

If such care can be given, select apple varieties of high quality which will ripen at intervals through the summer and fall. Even if you grow only two or three trees, you may have several varieties by grafting two or three varieties on each tree. Both summer apples and those suitable for winter storage will prove most desirable. The particular varieties which can be grown most successfully will vary in the different parts of the country.

In general, fruits requiring the least detailed attention through the growing season will prove best adapted to home production. Particularly satisfactory from this standpoint are the small fruits, or berries. Strawberries can be grown in practically all parts of the United States, and are well adapted to the home garden. Certain varieties of raspberries and blackberries also are widely adapted, though they may need winter protection in regions of extreme cold, and irrigation in very dry sections. Berries planted on fairly fertile well-drained soil require less detailed attention through the growing season than almost any other fruit. The time and attention given to a berry garden on the farm or on the city lot will generally be repaid many fold. A good selection of berry kinds and varieties will give a succession of fresh fruit throughout most of the summer and an ideal product for canning and preserving for winter use.

Cherries also are very satisfactory for planting in the home garden in many parts of the United States. Sour cherries are hardy and thrive over much of the country outside of the southern border states. Sweet cherries are more tender and are adapted only to the sections of the country where winter temperatures are not extreme. Cherries do not require as much detailed attention and spraying as do apples and pears; consequently, they are better suited to growing around the home.

Peaches also can be grown successfully in many parts of the United States. They are not hardy in the colder sections and also do not produce satisfactorily in the extreme south. Peaches are quite subject to attack by insects and diseases. Hence, in most parts of the United States some spraying is necessary to produce clean fruit. From the point of view of ease of production they are less satisfactory than small fruits or cherries.

The best varieties of fruits to plant will vary in every section of the country. Your experiment station or the United States Department of Agriculture will be glad to suggest varieties which are well adapted to your particular growing conditions. Considerable time and effort will be required to keep the garden clean and productive. Unless the owner is willing to devote the time and effort necessary to the production of good fruit, the garden should not be planted. This is particularly true in commercial fruit districts where neglected home orchards often are a source of infestation of good commercial orchards in the vicinity. The well cared for home fruit garden will return much, both of pleasure and fine fruit, to the man or woman who is willing to expend the effort it requires.